

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PARIS 24552 041755Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----098004 051521Z /44

R 041752Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5773
INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
USMISSION USUN

C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 24552

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, LE, FR
SUBJECT: FRENCH CONDITIONS FOR RENEWAL OF UNIFIL

1. MFA SECRETARY GENERAL SOUTOU TOLD THE DCM AUGUST 4 THAT THE FRENCH WOULD PROBABLY BE PREPARED TO MAINTAIN THEIR CONTINGENT IN UNIFIL BEYOND THE EXPIRATION OF ITS FIRST 6-MONTH MANDATE, BUT ONLY ON TWO CONDITIONS. FIRST, THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT MUST SUCCEED IN INSTALLING ITS FORCES IN THE SOUTH. SECOND, THE INSTALLATION SHOULD BE ACCOMPLISHED IN A WAY THAT WOULD RESULT IN THE LEBANESE FORCES BEING TOTALLY SURROUNDED BY UNIFIL FORCES AND THUS ISOLATED FROM ANY PROBLEMS WITH THE PALESTINIANS, THE CHRISTIANS, OR THE ISRAELIS. SOUTOU ADDED THAT, EVEN IF THESE CONDITIONS WERE MET, THE FRENCH WOULD PROBABLY INSIST THAT THE UNIFIL MANDATE BE EXTENDED FOR ONLY THREE MONTHS INSTEAD OF SIX. MOREOVER, FOLLOWING SEPTEMBER 19, CONFIDENTIAL

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THE FRENCH WOULD BEGIN A THINNING DOWN OF THEIR UNIFIL TROOPS.

2. SOUTOU EXPRESSED DISGUST WITH THE ROUTE CHOSEN TO GET THE LEBANESE UNIT SOUTH. HE SAID IT WAS CLEARLY A MOVE BY THE SYRIANS AND THE GOL AGAINST THE CHRISTIANS. HE SAID THAT, IF FRENCH UNIFIL GENERAL CUQ HAD NOT

BEEN ON VACATION AT THE TIME, THE ROUTE THROUGH HADDAD'S TERRITORY WOULD NEVER HAVE BEEN APPROVED.

3. SOUTOU EXPRESSED STRONG DISTRUST OF THE SYRIANS, WHOM HE ACCUSED OF TRYING TO USE TO THEIR OWN PURPOSE -- THAT IS AGAINST THE CHRISTIANS -- THE SENDING OF LEBANESE TROOPS SOUTH. HE CAUTIONED THE US THAT IT MUST "MULTIPLY ITS WARNINGS TO BEIRUT" TO PREVENT SYRIAN MANIPULATION OF THE LEBANESE FORCES.
HARTMAN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: COMBAT OPERATIONS, CENTRAL GOVERNMENT, INTERNATIONAL PEACEKEEPING FORCES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 04 aug 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978PARIS24552
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780321-0965
Format: TEL
From: PARIS
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780897/aaaaddtp.tel
Line Count: 72
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: f0ee356a-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 18 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1835203
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: FRENCH CONDITIONS FOR RENEWAL OF UNIFIL
TAGS: PINT, LE, FR, UNIFIL
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/f0ee356a-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014